

Land policy REVIEW

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
BUREAU OF AGRICULTURAL ECONOMICS



Editorial Notes

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IN FUTURE ISSUES: By EDWARD N. TORBERT, senior economic geographer of the Interior Department's Bureau of Reclamation, an article on the problems that government faces in the land opened to settlement through construction of Grand Coulee Dam. Mr. Torbert is one of a group of technicians engaged in comprehensive studies of the Columbia Basin. Other articles on the subject will follow. . . . R. R. RENNE, of Montana State College, will discuss public spending for land use and settlement programs, one of several that the *REVIEW* has printed on questions of public finance. VICE PRESIDENT WALLACE's treatment of national debt questions and ERIC ENGLUND's discussion of dual budgetary systems are two others that have already appeared. Continuing the analysis of changing impacts in a single rural county, RAYMOND HATCH will write about the rural church in Kingsbury County, S. Dak. Formerly a research assistant at South Dakota State College, Mr. Hatch is now engaged in postgraduate work at Washington State College.

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Post-War Planning—

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

SEVERAL MEN in the Department of Agriculture had their say about planning for post-war American agriculture in the July LAND POLICY REVIEW. Below are a few of the letters from readers giving varied opinions about present and future farm conditions. More will be printed in later issues.



TO ME, your July LAND POLICY REVIEW on "Planning for a Post-War Agriculture" says, "There's no point in helping the democracies win the war unless we also prepare to win the peace." The number one job is, of course, driving totalitarianism with its suppression of minorities, forced labor and militarism out of the world. A lasting peace of commerce and cultural advance cannot be contemplated without assuming that terrible ordeal out of the way first. But, equally, that ordeal is not worth suffering unless we also plan something better than totalitarianism and better than anything we've had up to now, anywhere in the world.

A farmer friend of mine said the other day, "If, 25 years from today

we are referring to World War II as the 'past' war, it will have been fought in vain. If we call it the 'last' war—and I mean last—then it will have been worth what it cost."

Planning the kind of peace everybody wants means some kind of world federation, less national sovereignty and disarmament. Surely we have learned these things. Selfishness among nations and among individuals must give way to the general welfare. These things I mention because I find it impossible to think in terms of the long-run well-being of American agriculture without such a world framework to operate within. The post-war problems of American farmers will be difficult enough to solve in any case—but in a world of nationalistic States and trade barriers there is no acceptable solution.

I still can't focus on agriculture alone in this process of thinking about post-war agriculture. First things first. And of much greater importance than any single farm problem is the problem of keeping our whole national economic machinery operating after the war. Steel production must never drop to 30 percent of capacity again—not even to 70 percent. Construction of houses, building of roads, manufacture of cars and airplanes must not fold up again because private capital and private enterprise “cannot see their way clear” to go ahead.

The farmer's stake in full employment of the nation's nonagricultural industries is fully as great as that of the laborer who draws his wages at the plant pay window. Real farm prosperity cannot be attained without prosperity in the cities. The sharp swings down and up in city workers' incomes in the last several years should have indelibly stamped that fact into the mind of every farmer and every farm leader.

Given a reasonably stable level of industrial employment—at a high level—and farmers can set about solving some of their long-run problems without being constantly plagued with keeping the wolf from the door.

City prosperity will not correct automatically all income problems. Low-income farmers will still have to be aided in all areas, and particularly in the South, by some such methods as are used by the Farm Security Administration. Plans should be made now to extend this specialized work with low-income farmers after the war. And, along with this program, we should make plans for expediting the movement

of surplus farmers into the cities. This may involve vocational trades training for young people in the farm areas. It implies, of course, full employment of city workers and an expanding production of industrial goods.

Our problems of conserving resources will not be solved by full industrial employment, though that will help by making it unnecessary for farmers to mine the soil to make a living. Public aid to farmers for conservation practices will be needed in all areas. A backlog of conservation plans should be in the making now for post-war use. "

Nutrition Crops

Neither will full industrial employment completely correct the maladjustments in our great wheat and cotton areas. We are not likely to need all the wheat and cotton acreage we have, even with much better world trade arrangements after the war. These areas must go out of wheat and cotton much more than they have and go into vegetables, feed crops, and livestock. Does that sound funny, coming from the Corn Belt? It seems to me that with full and expanding employment in the cities we'll need much more vegetables, milk, eggs, butter, cheese, pork, and beef than we now produce. The war has already waked us to the deplorable state of nutrition of much of our population. It doesn't seem likely that we can get too much of these products from the nutritive standpoint for a long time to come.

For commercial growers of these foods who have justifiable reasons for worrying about surpluses and low prices (1932 is not so far back), we should buttress incomes with greatly

expanded governmental food distribution machinery—such as the food-stamp and school-lunch programs. These programs also have the virtue of promoting the national goal of better nutrition. We have explored a small part of the way toward what can be done by Government subsidization of food consumption. We should prepare now to go much further after the war.

With such programs we can discard all idea of restricting food production. We may well begin to think of the national food plant running at full capacity the same as we think of the steel industry in full gear—a national necessity. To accomplish that we'll need continued government storage and loan programs and expanded crop and livestock insurance programs.

What I'm saying is that planning for a post-war agriculture should envision much greater public management of our entire economy—management of the economy for abundance. That will not be a return to normalcy—it will be an *advance* to a normalcy we have never known before.

LAUREN K. SOTH,
*Editor, Iowa Farm Economist,
Iowa State College.*

Increased Production of Goods

I agree wholeheartedly with the five principles quoted from Mr. Hull's speech on page 9. It would seem highly desirable for our best effort to be directed toward securing fewer restrictions in world trade and less attention given to restricting home production. A high level of living for all people can only result from increased production of all goods and not from the maintenance of an artificially high price level for agricultural products and a still higher level for industrial products. Of course, we can temporarily benefit one group by giving it legal advantages not afforded other groups. This has been done for the manufacturer of highly protected products and is being done for labor at present. Such advantage can only last until other groups secure even greater advantages and thus return the first group to a position of disadvantage. The cycle once started is endless.

This country has reached its high level of living through a combination of circumstances, among which abundant natural resources, laws encouraging individual initiative and a clever, efficient population are out-

Agriculture is the great art which every government ought to protect, every proprietor of land to practice, and every enquirer into nature to improve.

—DR. JOHNSON

standing. Just so long as our people are able to produce more per person than can be produced by others employed will we enjoy a higher level of living.

For agriculturists to be restricted to the acreage their grandparents could operate with one-row horse-drawn cultivators is no longer feasible. In order for individual farmers to have high levels of living, those men who can do so should be encouraged to take over larger acreages than their parents operated. This would necessitate moving many farmers off farms and into industry where they can be employed making things farmers and other persons who are employed desire. Some of the products of these transplanted farmers can be sold abroad if world prices are accepted.

This entire publication seems to reflect a defeatist attitude on world trade. We have never really attempted to secure trade until Mr. Hull was placed in his present position. The policy of maintaining high prices at home while dumping goods abroad has always evoked retaliatory measures by those nations receiving dumped goods. I cannot see how a policy of Government barter of surpluses will be more successful in securing free trade.

Recent protest meetings against the wheat quotas have been held in several States. This seems to me to be evidence that these farmers voted for something which they did not fully understand. More attention should have been given to supplying them with complete information about the program. They needed to know the unfavorable side of voting compulsory quotas as well as the unfavorable consequences of not voting them. I have confidence in

the ability of farmers to make their own decisions if supplied the necessary information and feel that the part of governmental agencies is to supply that information and not to try to induce farmers (by subsidies) to follow a program they do not wholeheartedly endorse. They will make mistakes, but so does everyone else. The consequences of each man's mistakes should be borne by him.

The recent tendency toward planning by Government agencies and the inducement of farmers to comply with the plans through the use of subsidies are moves toward the type of thing found in totalitarian States and foreign to the traditions upon which this country was formed and has prospered.

—L. B. SNYDER,
*Assistant Professor of
Economics,
College of Agriculture,
The University of Nebraska.*

The Death of Laissez Faire

Certainly it is none too early for us to give the best possible thought to agricultural problems and adjustments which will follow the war and possible large scale inflation. I am impressed with the fact that all of the able men who wrote for the July number of *LAND POLICY REVIEW* are far from being "laissez faire" economists. In fact, it appears that economists in large numbers have abandoned the old "laissez faire" doctrines. I am inclined to think that this is an inevitable trend, although in defense of earlier economists it probably should be emphasized that they held to "laissez

faire" doctrines not so much in a faith that economic adjustments would be quick and accurate as in a lack of faith in governments to bring about adjustments primarily on a basis of the greatest promotion of general welfare.

The problem of getting the citizenship, as well as the governing bodies of this or any country, to keep the general welfare always in mind is undoubtedly a major one in democracy. If we can get our citizenship to really think about the conditions and developments of the present day, I believe that all will be impressed with the necessity for considering the general welfare ahead of or along with individual and group interests. Herein lies a major problem for education. Today group interests are too often promoted without reference to the entire citizenship.

The character and intensity of our post-war problems in agriculture will depend to a large extent on the degree of maladjustment which results from the war period. Shall we put our principal emphasis for avoiding destructive inflation in the establishment of fixed prices, or shall we place more trust in higher taxation to drain off purchasing power and thus avoid undue competition from greatly increased buying power? As an individual, it seems to me that we will have less difficulty in post-war adjustment if an intelligent policy of taxation is followed. Price fixation seems to require policing all the way down to the ultimate consumer and this is too closely suggestive of totalitarian methods.

Another particular problem is that of occupational adjustments following the war. To one who is engaged in educational effort, it seems

clear that we should modify our educational institutions, particularly in rural areas, so that vocational retraining will be possible on a large scale. Certainly it will require Federal or State subsidy to place vocational training opportunities at the disposal of those rural areas where the population is most inclined to outrun the local employment opportunities.

These are only a few of the many questions which need the best effort of educational and political workers throughout the country.

—ROBERT R. HUDELSON,
*Assistant Dean,
College of Agriculture,
University of Illinois.*

Government and Democratic Controls

• There will be general sharing in Mr. Tolley's hope that "Some way must be found to make sure that we do not have again millions of idle hands and thousands of jobs crying to be done." But the knotty problem of how to avoid such a situation in the post-war world still remains. Mr. Tolley's solution apparently lies in a grandiose but rather vague program of public works. Mr. Eisenhower discusses such a program in somewhat more detail. The latter states rather positively that "After we have had a generous taste of the real possibilities of full employment, we will not again tolerate mass unemployment, * * *." Perhaps, but the skeptic may suggest that we have had full employment before and have had subsequent serious unemployment.

Granting that public works can be used advantageously to alleviate the

distress of depression unemployment, it still remains that as long as we rely primarily on private production the major solution for depression and unemployment must be found in private rather than public activity. Dr. Ezekiel's article is the only one in the issue which gives positive indication of the acceptance of this view. May not an important part of the solution for farm difficulties be found in nonagricultural types of production? Future issues might well devote space to such aspects of the problem.

The problem of Government finance is raised by Mr. Tolley when he asks the question "What are we going to use for money?" Unfortunately, he employs it merely as a rhetorical question to serve as a springboard for some pep talk about not being afraid of fear. Banishment of fear will not settle war debts. They are likely to become a decided limiting factor in public works programs of the future. The question of what we are to use for money calls for some realistic discussion worthy of space in future issues.

Mr. Tolley seems to think that as a result of the defense program we are "on the way toward prosperity that will be beyond any levels we have reached before." Perhaps he is thinking of the national income in dollars as the measure of prosperity. Priorities, prospects for rationing, rising living costs, steeply rising taxes, all cast doubt on how real this prosperity is likely to be. We can not carry on a vast defense program or a war and have business as usual. Is there not place for a realistic appraisal of the sacrifices which defense and war entail? Also, since inflation is a factor in the

picture, why not have an appraisal of prospects in this field?

Dr. Kellogg's appeal for a closer understanding between natural and social scientists will strike many a responsive chord. Perhaps there are opportunities for throwing more light on how this may be attained.

Mr. Eisenhower emphasizes the importance of weighing the "relative social worth" of various public works projects. Should we not likewise try to weigh the relative want-satisfying powers of public and private activities? The question is not merely one of the relative merits of using resources or letting them be idle but also one of the relative merits of different uses.

"Family-Type"?

Mr. Maris has plenty of company in his free use of the term "family-type farm." The popular assumption seems to be that this is readily definable in concrete terms. How generally is the variety of variables appreciated? These include among others, the location, type of farming, the ability of the operator and his family. Unless the concept can be made clear-cut how can it be made the basis for homestead exemption, graduated land taxes and the like? Also, do we not need to recognize that there may be some conditions under which relatively large-scale farming units possess some advantages? Is it in society's interest to legislate against such units if that be the case? This subject invites further exploration. The author apparently wants to support more rather than fewer people on the land. This means dividing the agricultural income into more portions. Might we not be better off if more productive work opportunities could be

developed elsewhere than on the land?

Mr. Maris thinks we ought to reduce the number of tenants to about 1,000,000 and points out that this can be done by converting tenants into owners at a net annual rate of 30,000 over a period of 40 to 50 years. Unless some way is found to prevent a new crop of tenants from developing, the total number of cases will need to be considerably larger. Moreover, as this period is considerably longer than most of those aided will remain in farming, a considerable number of cases may be duplicates on the same farms. The program will have to be enlarged and continued indefinitely to produce the proposed result. Here again are a host of questions which need careful exploration. Under what circumstances is the lot of the tenant improved by such a program? Can the average operator pay off a 100-percent loan without undue sacrifice of living standards unless he is rather heavily subsidized? How far can the program go into areas of heavy tenancy without raising land prices? How will it solve problems of tenants whose status is primarily that of laborers? We need to do more than create a glorified picture of the beauties of owner operation. We need competent, dispassionate study of the methods and problems involved.

This discussion already is long enough so I shall conclude with a general observation. The articles in this and other issues stress the responsibilities of government. It takes a strong government, equipped with controls, to undertake such responsibilities. Does not this raise a problem worthy of the best thought of all of us, namely, how to

preserve the democratic features of government, to keep controls from engulfing us in dictatorship?

—O. B. JESNESS,
*Chief of Division of
Agricultural Economics,
University of Minnesota.*

Defense Shifts in the South

The food-for-defense program is giving the South an opportunity to make in a few months some needed shifts that might otherwise take years. Properly geared to defense and post-war defense needs, the South's 16,000,000 farm persons and half-billion farm acres can be a valuable larder for this and other countries.

The foods needed by fighting nations—milk, eggs, meats, and fats—are the livestock products that the South always has needed. But it has been unable to produce them without a major shift away from cotton, tobacco, and naval stores that have been the cash basis for its agriculture.

Immediate bottlenecks in such a shift are visible and should be attacked this year: A growing scarcity of livestock replacements, inadequate supplies of seed for feed crops, unusually high death losses among hogs, and greatly reduced supplies of harvest labor.

During the past few months, many large dairies around southern cities and defense centers have scoured the countryside for cows and heifers. At the same time, dairies are killing their day-old calves or selling them as vealers. As prices for dairy products and feed rise, more and more young calves will be

slaughtered unless some action is taken to move young stock into outlying areas that have a supply of low-quality roughages.

To solve this problem, the Government—through county agents, FSA supervisors, or local persons—might establish a purchase price, at least for the heifer calves, and distribute them at the purchase price plus a small charge for delivery to farmers with available pasture or feed.

The production of dairy replacements has already been recommended for various sections of the Piedmont as a source of cash under normal conditions. The suggested program might hasten this change by several years.

Mild winters give the South a head start in increasing production of feeds that livestock needs most. Larger acreages of barley, oats, vetch, Austrian peas, and crimson clover should be seeded this fall to provide the feed essential for such increases. More than the usual amount of seed should be held over from crops now being harvested.

But it is doubtful whether farmers or private seed companies will take the risk of increasing their seed stocks sufficiently. A plan is needed whereby reputable seed houses would agree to maintain a 35 to 50 percent seed reserve for such crops, and in exchange the Government would agree to remove the unsold volume at a fixed price. Extending the grant-in-aid seed program to winter grains as well as to winter legumes might be a good thing, too.

Pigs are farrowed in the Coastal Plains in Alabama, Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina in about equal numbers at most seasons of the year, although farrowing is somewhat

heaviest in late spring. Hogging off peanuts in the fall provides the bulk of the feed.

By breeding in late November or early December for late spring litters, the amount of summer feeding could be reduced, yet the pigs would be in better shape when turned onto peanuts. The control of breeding will require more fencing, and the sows must be brought off open range.

Hog losses in the peanut sections in the lower South were great in 1940, apparently mostly among hogs running on peanuts without supplemental feeding. Cottonseed meal and tankage, mixed, plus a small amount of grain, would guard against similar trouble this fall if a nutritional deficiency is involved.

Supplemental feeding would also increase the daily gain and will be profitable under present circumstances but would require fencing the peanut fields to keep range hogs out of the feed supply.

Community Harvests

Come harvest time next year, many communities will not have the usual workers. Some will be working in industry or in jobs vacated by soldiers. The farm operator will have to pay higher wages than he had counted on.

Wage rates will no longer be based upon the going farm pay of the neighborhood. Instead, wages obtained in some other lines of work, with higher pay for greater skill, will govern farm wages. Farmers will learn, too, that available labor will be less skillful and less experienced.

In many instances, the continued welfare of southern communities will depend upon getting the crops

harvested. Loans are outstanding. Store bills have been accumulating. These commitments, other bills, and taxes in 1943 will go unpaid if next year's crop is not harvested. To get the crops in, some communities could close stores three afternoons a week and dismiss school two weekday afternoons. Farm and civic organizations could ask everyone to pitch in, at a fair wage, and pick apples or cotton, with cash on hand for the workers every Saturday night. The seasonal elasticity in the labor supply in most southern communities would be startling if it actually became a civic and patriotic duty to see that the crops were harvested.

Local Adjustments

Many southern farmers, faced with difficult adjustments, are making only partial use of their land and family labor. In some places, the increased number of consumers brought in by defense industries, civilian aids in camps, and camps themselves offer a local market of growing proportions.

Recent press releases indicate that the Fourth Corps Area will buy nearly \$18,000,000 worth of meat, eggs, butter, milk, and vegetables from communities near the camps of 8 Southeastern States during the coming year.

Immediate surveys around Army camps might show where local agriculture may gain from diversification to produce for these new markets and at the same time might forestall possible shortages of essential foods. A survey of production possibilities could be made in 2 months by a competent production analyst, if he had the full coopera-

*No matter how little poetic,
how little articulate he is, the
song rises irrepressibly in his
heart, and he turns aside from
his task with a new glow of
fulfillment and contentment.*

—DAVID GRAYSON

tion of agricultural agencies, local business interests, and the Army.

Without improved marketing systems, many producers in the Southeast can never change their systems of farming. If surveys around defense centers show possibilities for increasing the production of vegetables, small fruits, honey, eggs, fresh meats, and dairy products, I suggest the establishment of a market pick-up service, perhaps subsidized by the Government up to, say, half the cost. The pick-up service in most instances would reduce costs, considering the community as a whole, and might well be continued after the war.

Most of these suggestions were reviewed and accepted as recommendations by the Production Adjustment Committee at the Southeastern Regional Agricultural Planning Conference in Asheville, N. C. They are immediate steps which would anticipate more comprehensive changes later.

Two alternatives are possible. Southern farmers can continue their traditional methods of farming, aided by Federal subsidies to make up for lost foreign markets. A second approach—a much more difficult one—would be to meet this situation squarely by removing all

barriers to changes in production and so enable southern farmers to adjust their agriculture to changing world conditions.

The first approach would be the path of least resistance—"muddling through." The second is a challenge for forceful democratic action.

—CHARLES R. SAYRE,
*Division of Farm
Management and Costs,
Bureau of Agricultural
Economics, Atlanta, Ga.*

The First Job: Setting Objectives

For a long time I have thoroughly enjoyed LAND POLICY REVIEW. It has had more than its share of outstanding articles in the field it represents.

Possibly it was the heat wave sweeping Iowa, but I did not get enthusiastic about the July issue. It seemed to me most of your authors did a great deal of wrestling without coming to grips with anything definite. There was too much high theory which I found especially hard to understand. I make exceptions to the articles by Maris and Hendrickson. It seems to me that we must first set up objectives which we have some hope of achieving. For example, let's agree on the number of people our land should support. At the same time, let's agree on the share of the national income these people must have in order to maintain an American standard of living. Mr. Maris has done a fair job of

this, and even goes so far as to specify the number of people on the land who must be tenants.

You will be interested perhaps in the information that our Des Moines Chamber of Commerce 2 years ago spent a 2-day discussion on post-war adjustments. Some of the leading men from Washington contributed. It is possible our Farm Institute this year will follow along similar lines. Until peace is established and we have some conception of the general pattern of world economics, it is extremely difficult to set up objectives for our own country.

—KIRK FOX,
Editor, Successful Farming.

The Need for Farmer Leaders

My main question would be as to a program whereby people could become acquainted with these many things and could devise some form of actual program in which they would have a definite part. While we are doing a great deal of talking about a program in which the farmers have a part, after all, most of the farmers have only a very vague knowledge of it, and, frequently no new leaders are developed who can, or will, take any active part in getting such ideas into operation. More definite emphasis upon that basis of our agricultural work would be exceedingly welcome.

—R. J. SAVILLE, *Head,
Department of
Agricultural Economics,
Louisiana State University.*

Intermountain Region Suggestions

The articles contained in the July 1941 LAND POLICY REVIEW cover most of the possible suggestions. There are, however, four, some of which may be new or at least needing emphasis at this time.

Agricultural income has been extremely variable and may become more so after the defense effort. Intermountain agricultural income is probably affected during normal times with more price fluctuations than any other area in the United States. High transportation charges to distant markets is the main reason for these fluctuations. It has become necessary to build up defenses against these fluctuations. Farmers diversify and use other defense measures. For a greater measure of relief it seems that a sliding scale of payments for land purchases and water construction charges would be advisable. This sliding scale should provide token payments some years and several times average payments for others. This would systematize the prevailing custom of moratoriums and renewals. It would have the advantage of giving the farmer a needed sense of security. It would tend to prevent speculation and "plunging" following years when returns are extremely high. After the defense effort is over, payments may need to be reduced to a rather low figure for a few years. General property taxes could be levied in the same way, if the county would borrow money at low rates of interest when farm incomes were extremely low. County borrowing must be done now anyway because of delinquencies which

run from 3 to 5 years when farm incomes are low. Bank rates of interest and minor penalties are slight deterrents when farmers have little income and credit. Many farmers borrow from the county in this way until more income is secured.

Where farms are of uneconomic size or in other ways need revision as to operation and ownership, some form of public exchange agency would probably be of great service. Farmers are slow in working exchanges among themselves and sometimes indebtedness on the land makes this difficult. A Government agent working locally with farmers and with credit agencies could probably increase the equity of both farmer and mortgage holder. Farmers are suspicious of private exchange agencies, and they are diffident about approaching a neighbor. Exchange of land is badly needed because of topography, irrigation ditches, shape and size of fields, as well as size of operating unit. To some extent the Farm Security Administration has attacked this problem.

An FSA for Other Farmers?

It appears that the advisory and supervisory work of the Farm Security Administration has proved its value to low-income farmers. It appears certain that other farmers could secure much value from a similar service which could be organized on a voluntary cooperative basis. The present type of farm-management associations modified to permit this service might serve this purpose. Credit agencies in general might find this service worth more than it would cost if part of the cost of the service was borne not on the loan but

on an extra fee basis. This service could be compulsory where loans were delinquent. It seems that this sort of service would work better for a while when tied up with some form of loan obligation. The writer is convinced that nearly all commercial farmers could afford to pay for this service on a fee basis. For the defense period and post-defense period, this service could help make quick adjustments as needed.

Education is needed with respect to land values. Farmers fail to relate prices paid for land to probable net farm incomes. It is almost universally true that the prices paid for poorer quality lands are higher when compared to any possible net farm income than is true for the better lands in the same general area. During the defense period inflation of the prices of the poorer lands may go still further. Customary share rents are frequently to blame for such poor relationship between land value and returns. Community Land Use Planning Committees could no doubt become an effective agency for education respecting land values. At present assessors are misled in their valuations by a price structure which is extremely faulty with respect to ability to pay. No doubt much poor land is farmed more intensively than it should be, and other land is not farmed at all because of potentially excessive overhead charges of interest and taxes.

—PAUL A. EKE,
*Head, Department of
Agricultural Economics,
University of Idaho.*

Some Questions from the Southwest

Might I propound a series of questions especially applicable to this section of the United States?

(1) Should not post-war agriculture be concerned with the fact that the United States has a "tung belt" capable of domestically producing the 150,000,000 pounds of tung oil annually imported from China?

(2) Should not post-war agriculture find a use for the 300,000 tons of rice straw and 200,000 tons of rice hulls burned annually in the Louisiana-Texas rice producing areas?

(3) Since sweetpotatoes grow prolifically in the South and from them can be produced an excellent starch, why should we continue to be dependent upon the Far East for 400,000 pounds of starch annually?

(4) Would it not be wise for post-war agriculture to concern itself very seriously with all that the phrase "crops for industrial uses" implies?

—P. F. LAWSON,
*Publicity Director,
Beaumont, Tex.,
Chamber of Commerce.*

A Note of Pessimism

We are quite pessimistic in regard to what may happen when this war comes to a close. Some of your writers, including Dr. Ezekiel, quite appropriately point out the possibility of closed factories, wide-spread unemployment, "and a new and deeper industrial depression." All seem to feel that defense and war activities can be effectively replaced with peacetime rehabilitation. We

wish we could share this optimism.

We think it is extremely doubtful if our Government will be in a position to take up the tremendous financial burden that will be involved in an attempt to gain economic stability. We will enter that period with the debts of two wars and of the big depression not paid.

—TRUE D. MORSE,
*Doane Agricultural Service,
St. Louis, Mo.*

For Thinking in Terms of the Nation

While I shall question some of the philosophy reflected in this issue of the REVIEW I want to express unqualified approval of the major thesis, namely, that we should now be giving active study to the adjustment problems which certainly lie ahead, and that our present defense efforts should, so far as practical, take cognizance of the longer term problems and in some measure contribute to their solution.

We have several very important items on the credit side of the ledger which we did not have in the last war period. Among these I would mention:

1. Greater awareness of the difficulties of readjustment after an intensive war effort.

2. The experience resulting from a recent post-war period and a great economic depression. Much discussion of principles and try-out of procedures now lies behind us and we should not need to spend so much time on these next time.

3. Economists and other social scientists have made much progress in understanding relationships as

they exist in modern society. Much of this newer doctrine is still in an exploratory and controversial stage, but the theoretical equipment with which we approach the next period is certainly much less naive than that with which we tackled the problems of the twenties and thirties.

4. We have a vastly greater reservoir of basic data for analyses and action programs than at any previous time in our history.

5. Many mechanisms have been developed which should be useful in dealing with postdefense problems, and we have a larger body of trained and experienced public employees than ever before. On the negative side it should, I think, be recognized that some of the mechanisms developed in recent years have possibilities of misuse as well as of constructive contribution.

It is true we cannot foresee very accurately the precise conditions under which demobilization may occur. Thus far, however, all wars have sooner or later come to an end, or at least to a stopping point, and the problems of demobilization have had to be faced. We do know that large labor forces are being built up in places and in industries where they cannot be readily employed in peacetime pursuits. It will not be easy and probably not possible to return them to their places of origin or to their previous occupations. Thus, we must start from the situations likely to exist at the close of hostilities. Furthermore, if we are to prevent a run-away situation with its aftermath of speculation, tragedy, and disillusionment, it is none too early to take strong and wise action now.

Now for a brickbat or two. This issue of the REVIEW, in my opinion,

carries far too much of the tone of what Dr. J. S. Davis has referred to as "agricultural fundamentalism." A few citations will illustrate what I mean. On page 5 you quote with emphasis and apparent approval Jesse Buel's statement that "The substantial prosperity of a country is always in the ratio of its agricultural industry and wealth." Few responsible students either of history or economics accept that statement as appropriate for modern conditions. Has it been true of England, of Germany, of Japan, of the United States? Yet they are great industrial nations. Has it been true of China, of Russia, of India, or of Brazil? They are great agricultural nations. This is not meant as an argument for the opposite view that industrialization is the way to prosperity. Each nation will attain maximum prosperity as it makes the wisest use of its resources.

National Welfare

The quotations from Grover Cleveland, from Xenophon, and from Gibbon, carry much the same thought as that of Buel which is quoted above, and the same thought appears by implication in some of the articles.

The most fundamental test before us is whether we as agriculturists, the labor people as labor partisans and the commerce people as business protagonists, can think and act in terms of national welfare or whether each of these great departments will merely implement the demands, wise or unwise, of its own group. While this problem is recognized in some of the articles,

adherence to the broader objective stated above is by no means universal even in the governmental programs of Agriculture, of Commerce, and of Labor.

Broad Planning

One other point seems to warrant comment even in so brief a statement. I am in full accord with the view stressed by Mr. Eisenhower that extensive public works projects should now be planned for prosecution in the postdefense period. Planning should not, however, be limited to these. Just as the redirection of public activity and underemployed resources is now inadequate for full development of defense activities, so redevelopment and expansion of public programs will be inadequate for the postdefense period. Present study and planning should include methods for stimulating and implementing expansion in private activity.

The articles carried in your July issue warrant much fuller comment and discussion than would be appropriate in a letter of this kind. Many of the views expressed are controversial and for that very reason, most useful and stimulating in opening up the subject. I hope they may be given widespread and constructive consideration throughout the Nation. May I congratulate you on the wisdom of focussing attention on this problem at this time?

—M. R. BENEDICT,
*Professor of
Agricultural Economics,
University of California.*

Post-War Planning—

THE DEPARTMENT ACTS

By ROY I. KIMMEL: *"The Department of Agriculture has already moved quickly past the stage of preliminary talks, and into positive action."* The author, chairman of the Department Interbureau Committee dealing with post-defense programs tells what is already being done to try to attain some of the goals discussed in the July issue.



"DEFENSE IS, of course, our first job," said Secretary Wickard in his memorandum authorizing establishment of the Interbureau Coordinating Committee on Post-defense Programs. "But," he continued, "it is not too much to say that planning for the world we wish to live in when the peace comes is actually a part of the defense effort itself."

Millions of Americans, preparing to defend this country at any cost, welcome every such sign that their Government is taking steps to make sure this war and the peace to follow will not be "just like the last one." They know the means exist to create a post-war world in which there will be no hunger, no families clothed in rags or poorly housed. They will redouble their defense efforts as soon as they become convinced they can have a part in building such a world.

In planning agriculture's place in such a post-defense world of plenty, the Department of Agriculture has already moved quickly past the stage of preliminary talks, and into positive action. For example, the De-

partment has submitted a number of proposals in the fields of land development, water development and forestry, to be included in the shelf of projects for the post-defense period. But this is merely the starting point and not the end of post-war planning.

As Secretary Wickard pointed out in his memorandum, "All this is good, as far as it goes. But I am convinced that much more needs to be done * * *. I am therefore asking the Bureau of Agricultural Economics to establish immediately an Interbureau Coordinating Committee on post-defense programs. This committee, including representatives of all appropriate agencies, will draw up the broad outlines of a national program of public work in the agricultural field—a program that will deal comprehensively with forestry, rural housing, range improvement, water facilities, and more. This general program will then be given to State and county land use planning committees for study and adaptation to local needs.

"As the work takes shape in the field it will be brought together and integrated on a national basis. I

hope that within the next year we will have a number of carefully prepared plans for public activity which will fit the needs of each region in terms of employment, conservation of our resources, and for improved levels of rural living."

Using the Blueprint

With this blueprint for action, the Interbureau Committee has begun work on a long and difficult task. Realizing that the burden of the work must be done in the field, the Interbureau Committee has worked out a grouping of States which divides the country into the nine regions indicated on the map on page 19. In each of these regions some one representative of the Department will be detailed to the task of sparkplugging the post-defense program for the region. In some cases this person may be the regional forester, in others, the regional BAE representative, the regional conservator of the Soil Conservation Service, or some other key Department officer.

The several State land use planning committees are expected to assume an important role in this work and the local planning committees throughout the country will take an active part in the development of the program. The action agencies in each region are of course directly concerned with those public works which are related to the land and to the interests of rural people. Their staffs will have to provide the technical assistance which will make possible the expression of the program in terms concrete enough to bear analysis by the National Resources Planning Board and the Bureau of the Budget.

The Department is cooperating fully with other agencies engaged in planning for the post-war period—particularly in supplying the National Resources Planning Board with concrete proposals for rural works, which will become a part of the broad, national public works program.

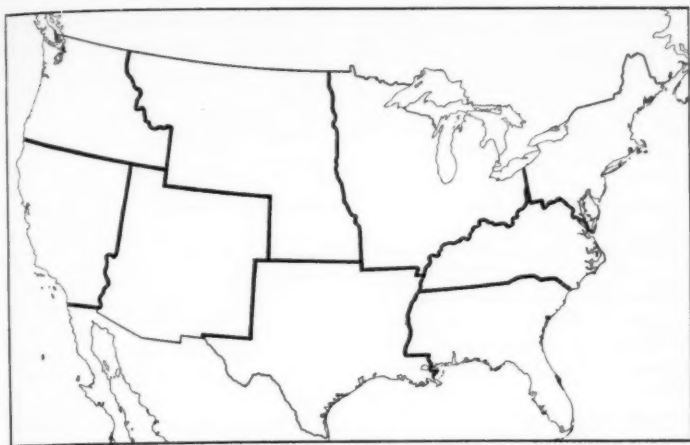
The first job before the committee is to start laying out a rural works program which will provide useful employment to persons living in rural areas in the post-war period. The rural works program involves three principal types of activity, each of which may be carried out by an agency of the department directly or the need for which may be called to the attention of a State or political subdivision, or of another Federal agency if it is properly within its line of work. Public roads are one such instance.

One type includes projects which restore and further develop the physical resources upon which agriculture depends. Among these projects will be soil conservation, water development, all phases of forestry, flood control, development of new land areas, and development of submarginal land areas.

Facilities for Folks

Another type includes projects which provide public facilities to rural people, such as roads, rural electrification, county agricultural buildings, improvement of terminal market facilities, quick-freezing plants, and food-storage facilities.

Still another type of activities essential in a rural works program includes projects that relate to human welfare, such as rural housing, rural hospitals, and recreational centers and facilities.



Regions for post-war planning

It is clear that the accumulation of a reservoir of concrete projects is an integral part of the post-war planning process. But beyond that, the committee is trying to conceive of a world that can attain a higher standard of living than it has ever known before. However valuable public works projects may be in providing stopgap employment during the transition from defense to peacetime commerce, they cannot alone provide full employment nor avoid a post-war depression.

It seems the part of wisdom, then, for us to plan such a shelf of rural works projects which would be needed even though no international emergency existed. We have had a great deficit of such projects, and if we plan to fill that deficit we shall be sure first of all that our projects are sound from the standpoint of conferring lasting benefits. Public and private good, not mere work relief, must be our goal.

Not Public Works Alone

But in order to build the kind of post-war world we want, and fit our agriculture into it, our plans must reach far beyond the limitations of public works. For example, leaders in agriculture must be alert to any changes in the national economy which may affect them during the post-defense period.

Job number two of the Interbureau Committee, therefore, is to explore and keep abreast of developments in this field so that the Department may be able to see what agricultural-industrial relations are likely to be in the future.

The subcommittee assigned to this subject will consider how industrial effort may be shifted from the production of war materials to the production of goods for peacetime in order that levels of industrial employment reached during the defense period may be maintained. We have already demonstrated that

we can convert peacetime industries to the manufacture of defense goods and there seems to be no reason why it should not be largely a reversible process, resulting in considerable stabilization of employment.

Fiscal Policy

This subcommittee will also study probable trends in national fiscal policy. Agriculture, like industry, is greatly affected by such things as a rise or fall in the general level of prices, or by types and volume of taxation.

International factors will also be closely examined in relation to their effect on the national economy. Agriculture will be vitally interested in all efforts to restore world trade, in whatever plan is evolved for feeding post-war Europe and Asia, and in the form of any possible repayment of materials now being leased and loaned to the democracies insofar as such transfers may affect world trade.

Finally, the study of agricultural-industrial relations must of course include an analysis of the future market for agricultural products, the land and human resources available to agriculture and possible changes in the agricultural plant.

Since 1933, the Department of Agriculture has devoted increasing attention to a third type of activities which must be considered in any plan for a better post-war world. It has launched a number of programs directly designed to improve the general levels of living of farm people of the United States. For example, the Department has provided better housing for a few thousands of farm people. Yet the size

of the job still to be done is indicated by the recent estimate of the Inter-bureau Committee on Rural Housing that our farm people need at least 2 to 3 million new homes.

The Department, in a number of ways, is helping to improve the diets of farm and city people alike throughout all the nation. Yet diseases of malnutrition still exist. The South alone will need at least 19 percent more cattle, 22 percent more cows milked, and 19 percent more hogs and pigs during the post-war period, according to recent estimates made by the BAE in cooperation with other agencies of the Department and State colleges of the South. Even this increased production would not be sufficient to provide southern people with a minimum adequate diet.

The Department of Agriculture has sought to halt the increase of tenancy, which now prevails on two-fifths of the Nation's farms. But the job still to be done overshadows what has already been accomplished in that field.

These are but a few of the many lines of activity now in progress. The development of plans to improve levels of living, not on a demonstrational basis but rather on a scale as broad as the need itself, is the third major job of the Inter-bureau Committee.

The subcommittee at work on this task is exploring means of developing an adequate health program, including nutrition, housing, sanitation and medical care. It is also considering programs to increase security of tenure, modernize farm equipment, develop industries in rural areas, and to improve rural education.

The Organization of Our Economy

One clear lesson from the present war in Europe and from our own defense activities is the fact that we can have a world of plenty if only we will to have it, and set to work to organize our economy to make such a world.

To "give the devil his due" we should be mindful of the fact that Germany has confounded all the experts who insisted year after year that her economy must soon collapse because she lacked gold. Lifetime habits of thinking in terms of a traditional money economy had almost blinded these experts to the fact that money is the shadow, and not the substance of wealth. A nation's real wealth consists of its natural resources, and the morale, the skills, and the physical well-being of its people.

Our own national defense program is demonstrating the fact that our democracy can attain virtually full employment without the evil genius of a Hitler. But we are now nearing full employment because we have been driven by a common danger into organizing our economy for the unlimited production of defense goods. As he implied in *Mein Kampf*, it is our resources and our productive capacity that Adolf Hitler has most envied and most feared. His greatest hope has been that we would leave them comparatively dormant and unorganized.

Within the framework of democracy, we must find the means of obtaining the same unity of will which is now driving our defense effort forward, to organize our economy for the creation of a sustained peacetime prosperity after the war. The

very fact that "wartime prosperity" is possible, is double proof that we can be even more prosperous in peacetime when our energies are turned to producing new wealth instead of to forging weapons for the protection of the physical and social goods we already possess.

As a first step we must remember once and for all that money is but the symbol of wealth. We must worry less about hoarding our money, less about the national debt, and more about conserving and developing the human and physical resources which are the real wealth of the Nation.

Toward Abundance

When we reach that point, we shall be well along the road toward the sort of planned abundance we want and mean to have in the post-war era. Through the food for defense program sponsored by the Department of Agriculture, the Nation's farmers are now making an auspicious beginning toward the production of planned abundance.

The tremendous productive capacity of the American agricultural and industrial plant is the foundation upon which the Interbureau Committee's planning must and will be based. It is worth mentioning, in passing, that the production of mere

The effort to extend the domain over nature is the most healthful and most noble of all ambitions.

—BACON

abundance is not enough. It must be an abundance of useful goods.

The production of more and more wheat at a time when the world's storehouses are already groaning under record surpluses of wheat would scarcely be useful production. Certainly not, when measured against the possibility of producing foods of which there is a national deficiency, on that same land.

Therein lies one difference between true abundance, and crushing surpluses of the sort we piled up after the last war. A return to unplanned, laissez-faire economy would no doubt give us a tremendous total volume of agricultural production; but only careful planning can direct that production into the most useful channels.

The Two Alternatives

Two alternatives face us in the post-defense period. We can proceed timidly, pessimistically on the theory that depression is a fixed part of the economic cycle, as inevitable as the rising and setting of the sun. In that event, we probably shall have a "breadline" program of relief to keep down open revolt of the underprivileged. And perhaps we shall continue to wonder now and then, in our more philosophical moments, why it is that fate decreed farmers must be hard up because they produce too much, while thousands of families suffer from malnutrition because they have too little.

A Hard, Pioneering Job

Or, we can move forward with the courage befitting a country of vast resources and advanced technical skills. We can resolve to set cer-

tain minimum levels of living below which our people shall never sink again. We can guarantee adequate food, clothing, and shelter for all our people in the city and on the farm; and in doing so we can become, physically and spiritually, a far richer nation than ever before.

It will be a hard, pioneering job to conquer such a social frontier; as hard a task in its way as that faced by earlier Americans who mastered the Nation's physical frontiers. But there may be some pleasant surprises along the way. We may find, for example, that with proper food and medical care large numbers of our "unemployables" are again ready and eager for productive work; that many a "lazy" person has shaken off his lethargy. Indeed, the Department of Agriculture has already found that a little medical care will go a long way toward rehabilitating many a farm family whose economic failure was due to physical defects.

The knowledge that we can create a world without insecurity and want is a challenge to prove we have a capacity for social and economic invention that can keep step with our proven talent for mechanical invention. We must use to the full existing techniques for the equitable distribution of the products of our farms and factories; we must improve upon them; we must invent new ones.

Our real problem for the post-defense period lies in the fields of distribution and consumption. There can be no further doubt about our ability to produce enough for the highest standard of living the world has ever known, albeit we must so direct our energies as to produce the right things.

In the words of Milo Perkins, who has been a leader in programs of the last few years to improve our distribution of goods, "In every civilization of the past, bar none, if you took the most that it was possible to produce and divided it among the people who are here to share it, the answer was always a lousy standard of living * * * [But] if we produced all that we could and divided it among the people who are here to share it, we would come out with a very good standard of living for the first time in all his-

tory. That's the most important thing that's happened to the human race since the discovery of fire and the invention of the wheel."

That fact is our challenge to plan more fully and more wisely than ever before. That fact is our assurance we can succeed in creating a post-war world of plenty, where previous generations have been doomed to failure. And the knowledge we are already on the road to building such a world for tomorrow makes America more than ever worth defending today.

Elastic

No mere bankers' plan will meet the requirements, no matter how honestly conceived. It should be a merchants' and farmers' plan as well, elastic in the hands of those who use it as an indispensable part of their daily business.

—WOODROW WILSON

What Can We Do

BY FARM PLANNING?

By W. F. WATKINS. Agricultural planning is a comparatively new procedure, but it is old enough to allow evaluations and questions on future directions. Here is one evaluation which adds up to the point that agricultural planning needs to begin with the individual farmer and his farm.



A GREAT deal of agricultural planning has been going on in recent years, but not enough where it counts—on the farm. Instead of beginning with the farmer on his individual farm, much of the planning has started with the technicians, philosophers, and administrators.

Like everyone else, the farmer makes plans. Every day, in just plain farming, he makes and works a plan, written or unwritten, even though the word "planning" itself may sound strange to him.

Two elements have complicated individual farm planning: One is the realization that the best farm planning is not a day-to-day or year-to-year proposition, but that it is long-time planning with objectives to be attained over a period of years. Another is that technological progress has made individual farm planning a difficult job, requiring considerable knowledge and foresight.

Individual planning outlines a program of farm operations related to the goals of group planning, to utilize farm resources for the greatest present and future good. It is concerned primarily with the farmer's

use of his own land, although factors outside his farm boundaries are also given due consideration.

Group planning through such familiar forms as land-use planning, state planning, or resource planning, is an important vehicle for solving agricultural problems in a changing world. Here groups of farmers join with governmental planners, administrators and technicians.

Individual planning and group planning, each important in itself, join to form agricultural planning.

To illustrate the relationship between group planning and individual farm planning, let us consider a specific land use planning report.

The land use planning committee for Caswell County, N. C., listed several problems and recommended action on them—including erosion control and soil improvement; forest management and improvement; farm tenancy; livestock numbers, quality, and production; live-at-home food program; health service, and home beautification and improvement.

How does this fit in with individual farm planning? The individual farmer can have but one plan,

even though he wants and needs all the help he can get from administrators and technicians of different governmental agencies. The plan may have many segments, but the parts must mesh into a workable whole.

Goals like those listed in Caswell County can be reached only through individual farm plans which include erosion control, livestock improvement, and the rest. The farmer must play the dominant role in developing the plan for his own individual farm. He must be conscious of weaknesses in his past program and have information that will help him to correct them.

For many years, the Extension Service has aided individual farmers in their planning by bringing them the benefits of agricultural research. But since 1932-33, Congress has authorized the creation of several new agencies to help solve widespread agricultural problems.

As the programs of the Agricultural Adjustment Administration, Soil Conservation Service, and Farm Security Administration develop and become more stabilized, the agencies are becoming more interested in the individual farm plan as a method of assisting in moving toward their objectives—particularly in obtaining more conservation.

For example, the objective of the FSA farm and home plan is to assist the farm family to make the best possible living from the available resources. The plan includes a report of the last year's business, a financial statement, and a program for the next year. It details the crops for each acre of cropland, seed and fertilizer to be used, and a summary of estimated receipts and expenses. The home section includes a pro-

gram for the production of food, with special attention to the garden and storage of food supplies. The whole plan gives particular attention to developing diversified programs with at least two sources of income.

The Best Use of Land

The farm plan developed by Soil Conservation Service technicians for assisting the farmer has soil conservation as its main goal—the best use of the land acre by acre and field by field—a plan that has all the necessary tools to achieve conservation according to the specific conditions on the farm, including those practices that require planning skill beyond that of the farmer and many additional practices to apply which he needs skilled assistance. It is developed with the farmer and provides not only for the control of erosion but continued security of farm life and maintenance of or increase in income.

The Agricultural Conservation Program objective is soil conservation, parity farm income, adequate supplies of farm products, and food, and feed crops for home use. The plan sheet assists farmers in utilizing to the fullest extent the features of the program, helping them plant within acreage allotments, utilize other cropland, use soil-building allowances most effectively, and compute payments.

The Extension Service is providing farmers with technical information as a guide in their individual farm planning. During recent years Extension workers in several States have developed forms to be used in planning the farm business. Without exception, they have started with a land use program, emphasizing a

plan that maintains soil productivity through proper cropping systems, soil treatments, and conservation practices.

These Extension workers encourage a choice of enterprises, including a livestock program that fits the farm, the farmer, and the markets. The farm income is the general measure used to determine the standard of living. The inventory of resources includes soil, the type of tenure, the labor supply, kinds and classes of livestock, building, machinery, power, and markets.

To this list could be added the Farm Credit Administration, which uses farm plans primarily for appraisal purposes; the Tennessee Valley Authority, and other agencies. In general, the individual farm plans have been developed from the standpoint of each agency's program and cover only segments of a complete farm plan. On the other hand, there are common interests in each plan in the use of land which represent some minimum essentials of an individual farm plan.

Will not a common farm plan form used by all governmental agencies covering some of these minimum essentials result in more effective conservation of the soil and cooperation of agencies? Cooperation of an agency with a long-time individual farm plan is being demonstrated in Alabama, in 1941, by the application of the farm conservation plan provision of the 1941 Agricultural Conservation Program. After a thorough analysis of the problems on all farms, a 5-year minimum conservation plan was developed based on four points: Terracing all cropland subject to erosion; growing erosion-resisting crops on 25 percent of the cropland each year; and establishing

and maintaining 1 acre of perennial crops and 1 acre of permanent pasture for each 15 acres of cropland.

This involves a plan for each farm. Through the cooperation with ACP committeemen of Extension Service, SCS, teachers of vocational agriculture, and FSA supervisors, individual plans were developed with each farmer, establishing the 5-year and annual soil conservation goals.

The Need of Simplicity

An analysis of the farm conservation plans being developed in the Soil Conservation Districts by farmers and Soil Conservation Service technicians shows that these practices in the 1941 Agricultural Conservation Program are a major part of each plan and that the minimum standards of the ACP plan were not excessive on any farm. On an average, the district farm plans provided for 2½ times as much in the way of these same practices as the 5-year ACP plans, which reach nearly all farms and use all the available materials and technical assistance in approaching the goals established the first year of the 5-year plan.

If farm plans are to be applicable to nearly all American farms and to the administration of action programs, simplicity is essential. But simplicity cannot be attained at the expense of a failure to accomplish basic objectives.

The farm plans of agencies must be adequately developed for their segment of the farm program. Any agency program designed to meet the many different conditions existing on farms in all parts of the country must be very complex, but this does

not mean that it must be complex as it applies to the individual farm.

Degree of Cooperation

Agricultural programs built on the principle of cooperation of the farmer, governmental agencies, and technicians must give recognition to different degrees or levels of intensity of cooperation with the individual farmer. In the most extensive type, the farmer would develop his own plan with little or no assistance. Another extensive method would include training of local leaders to provide assistance to the individual farmer in developing his plan.

In the most intensive method, professionally trained farm planners would assist the farmer in developing a plan for his farm. This type of planning is limited by the number of available technicians, but is essential in demonstrating good farm planning and in training local leaders and the individual farmer on the value of practices, and how they are a part of a complete farm program.

Individual farm planning is often simpler than the execution of the plan; that is, a farmer can decide that his cropland should be strip cropped and terraced if it is to be continued in cultivation and could include the practices in his plan, but he would need skilled assistance in making the application to the land. On the other hand, skilled assistance may be necessary in making the plan, as in locating of acid soil area in fields needing application of limestone.

The primary need in individual farm planning is to integrate the programs of subject matter specialists and agencies into the plan in such a way as to enable the farmer to apply the best farming practices and utilize

the assistance from the several agencies. The crop production segment of the individual farm plans requires the integration of the soil management practices, the allotment of crops, the livestock feed needs, the erosion control practices, the labor supply, the farm equipment, and many other single factors within the whole farm organization.

The objectives of the several action programs have been sufficiently clear to the farmer so that few serious problems have been confronted, even though several plans have been made for many farms.

Subject-Matter Specialists

With respect to the subject-matter specialists, clashes have been more obvious and more difficult to eliminate. Specialists, however, have become more conscious of the relationship of their activities to land use and the farmer. Instead of continuing to operate within a small sphere of interest, the specialist has developed a perspective of the whole agricultural problem and sees more clearly how dependent the agricultural program is on his particular segment fitting into the whole, making possible a total solution.

The bringing of several subject-matter specialists together on a farm has resulted in one plan that involves the knowledge of all the subject-matter fields rather than several solutions or plans they would work out independently. The individual subject-matter specialist cannot hope to have a direct part in all individual farm plans but can and will derive satisfaction from seeing that all farm plans take account of science insofar as practicable.

Outlets of Technology

The work of several action agencies in assisting with individual farm plans has opened a broad outlet for the application of technological developments. These action programs have provided a means of spreading and obtaining the application of technological knowledge without the direct contact of subject-matter specialists with each farmer.

The Interbureau Coordinating Committee of the Department of Agriculture on Individual Farm Planning studied the problem and made three recommendations: That a technical handbook should be developed for an individual area; that a set of forms be prepared for recording the minimum essentials of a farm plan; and that some experiments be conducted in the major type of farming areas.

The technical handbook would contain the recommendations agreed to by technicians, administrators, and farmers, with respect to classes of land; soil-building and conservation practices, classified on the basis of those that can be applied without

technical assistance and those requiring technical skill beyond the ability of the farmer; estimated yield of crops from land classes under specific systems of management; live-stock feed requirements and production; types of tenure and relationship; relationship of types of farming to classes of land; and economic feasibility of adjustments.

The Six Sections

The forms suggested were similar for the long-time plan and the current-year plan. Six sections were included in the forms: Farm identification, farm map, land use and soil-building practices, crop program, livestock program, and financial budget of receipts and expenses.

An extensive method of individual farm planning will make it possible to establish soil-building goals for nearly all farm units, to determine progress in achieving soil conservation, to plan and make allotments of the acreage of specific crops in accordance with good land use and conservation, as well as clarify the assistance of technicians and administrators to individual farmers.

The Management

OF SEASONAL LABOR

By WILLIAM T. HAM. *Farmers are turning more and more away from local hired men to itinerant, seasonal laborers. The change often involves loss of a sense of responsibility and creates a social burden for the community.*



AS LONG as the labor force in an area comprises mainly year-round hired hands plus some local seasonal workers, bad or indifferent management of labor adds to costs, but is not likely to increase noticeably the number of laborers, their economic difficulties, or their community problems. On the family farm the inefficient hired hand is likely to work in the company of his employer. Both he and his boss, their families, and the consuming public bear the cost of bad management. But the worker is still fed, housed, and paid, and so far as he is concerned the community has no problem of unemployment.

On a farm that hires much seasonal labor, management can afford to be indifferent to certain costs that it engenders, for these costs rest at least partly upon the farm laborers and the community, not upon the farm enterprise. Time wasted by management need not be paid for, and family maintenance, after the farm work is done, is no concern of the farmer.

What if the crop is harvested in 10 days by a crew of 50 rather than in 30 days by a crew of 15? True, by

the latter arrangement the crew has a lengthened earning period, and by the former the community is faced with the problem of dispersing or otherwise occupying or supporting on relief a body of unemployed much larger than need be.

But what business is that of the farm operator? To the extent to which farm labor is performed by seasonal hands needed only for a brief period, the farm operator is freed—unless conscience interferes—from some of the basic responsibilities of good management. In the extreme case he may become like the farmer mentioned in the 1938 Report of the Texas Farm Placement Service, who, when reminded of the desperate circumstances of the cotton pickers he brought to his place but failed to employ, remarked that there was “nothing to worry about”—they “would soon fade out.”

The perception of the danger of such indifferent management is not new. In 1928 Dr. C. L. Holmes, late official of the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, wrote in *Economics of Farm Organization and Management* that “one of the most important social problems of rural life is the efficient utilization of this body of

(seasonal) laborers and the bringing about of better living conditions for them."

"In highly specialized farming," he said, "such as the production of sugar beets, truck and fruit crops, in which intermittent or 'casual' labor is employed in gangs, the personnel problem in all its perplexities has developed very much the same as it has in industry."

That problem, as a result of the increased use of seasonal labor, is now more serious than it was in 1928. The increasingly seasonal character of hired farm labor is reported from many areas.

Where From?

In a BAE survey in Atchison County, Mo., it was noted that there were fewer persons in the county and in the rural areas of the county in 1940 than in 1930.

But in all towns save one there were more people than in 1930. Where did they come from?

According to J. R. McFarling, county welfare director, "An increasing percentage of farm labor is of the seasonal type. They are employed when there is immediate and urgent work to do, and laid off when that work ends. The older farm laborer, who is experienced in farm work, is having difficulty securing employment because he knows little or nothing about power machinery. The younger farm worker usually knows something about power machinery but very little about farming. As a result, the latter is often employed from the middle of March until July as long as there is power-machinery work to do. But when that work is finished he is laid off."

It is these seasonal laborers, as well as the older workers, who drift into the towns, where they compete with casual laborers already there for whatever work is to be had, and frequently live under deplorable conditions.

In many areas, as in Atchison County, decreased employment of year-round labor is said to be associated with the increased use of farm machinery. In the South, however, this association seems to be less inevitable than elsewhere. In the Cotton Belt, the presence on the plantation of many year-round laborers, both sharecroppers and wage hands, often has been due to the necessity of anchoring to the farm a seasonal labor force sufficiently large to take care of the peak seasonal operations of chopping and picking cotton. In this area, reduced cotton acreage and a plentiful supply of labor have increased the willingness to risk the chances of being able to obtain seasonal labor when it is needed, without trying to hold it on the farm during the entire year. Mechanization, when resorted to, has increased the tendency.

In the Southeast

A typical Southeastern farm, according to recent BAE surveys, still obtains most of its seasonal labor nearby. Occasionally a particular crop operation may call for laborers from beyond the area, but it is possible for them to go back and forth daily to work on the farm.

Some crops require such nonlocal labor only under exceptional circumstances; with some it is regular procedure. Over a period of 2 or 3 years there is hardly a principal crop that does not use some nonlocal seasonal

labor. Sometimes the number of workers called for is large. The importance of such labor seems to be increasing.

In Alabama, for example, in the fall of 1940 six counties were surveyed, two in the Tennessee Valley cotton area (Madison and Limestone), one in the Upper Coastal Plain cotton area (Chilton), one in the Black Belt (Lowndes), and two in the Gulf Coast dairy, truck, fruit, and self-sufficing area (Mobile and Baldwin). In the first the investigators found an increasing tendency to dispense with the once customary year-round labor and to rely upon seasonal labor for cotton chopping and picking. Few of these seasonal workers, however, were from outside the district. Indeed, the supply of labor was so abundant that workers were supplied to other areas, such as the Mississippi Delta, for the cotton harvest. Toward the end of 1940 there was a considerable permanent emigration out of the Tennessee Valley, due partly to the operations of the Tennessee Valley Authority.

Berry Workers

In Chilton County, Ala., of the large number of seasonal workers employed, a few came from outside the area chiefly for work in the strawberry harvest. Most likely they followed the berry harvests from Florida, and moved on to the Mississippi Valley, Tennessee, and Kentucky.

During the early 1930's laborers moved from industrial centers outside Chilton County to the farms. At the time of the survey some of these workers were going back to the steel mills in Birmingham. In October 1940, according to the Alabama

Employment Service, 40 percent of the Shelby and Chilton County unemployment compensation claims were out-of-county claims. In November 1940, 24.3 percent of the claims were of this sort. Thus it appears that people living within these two counties, many of them farm people, worked at certain periods in covered industries in other localities; when they became unemployed, they returned to their rural homes.

The Black Belt

In Lowndes County, Ala., all of the many seasonal farm laborers were of local origin. From this area seasonal workers were supplied to other nearby districts. The changes in the type of farming now going on in the Alabama Black Belt undoubtedly will increase the outward movement. In 1940 the reduction in the cotton acreage exceeded the reduction required under the cotton-control program; farmers were shifting rapidly to livestock. This process involves a considerable reduction in local need for laborers, who must seek work elsewhere.

In Baldwin County, Ala., local seasonal and migrant labor is used for planting and harvesting potatoes and harvesting green corn, watermelons, and cotton. It is estimated that around 2,300 migrant laborers come into this county in May and June, and that during only 4 months of the year no migrants are at work. The nonlocal laborers come from surrounding counties and from southern Florida.

At harvest time there is an interchange of workers among the cotton areas of central and northern

Georgia and the cotton, vegetable, and tobacco areas of southern Georgia.

The Citrus Worker

Labor also moves from the latter area to the citrus districts in Florida and back again. In both exchanges the flow of labor south exceeds that in the opposite direction. Florida also supplies the Carolinas with labor for harvesting tomatoes and potatoes; relatively little labor, however, moves from the Carolinas to work in Florida.

This free movement among States has been going on for a long time, but it appears that labor is ranging farther from its home base. Sometimes it follows regular routes; sometimes it seems to move at random. Such nonlocal labor appears to be declining now in importance in the North Carolina peach and potato harvest, but in the peach area around Spartanburg, S. C., where the opposite is true, it appears that a high proportion of the labor requirements soon will be met by migrant labor.

Cotton presents peculiarities. The mechanization of Southeastern cotton farms appears to be increasing rapidly. The process tends to emphasize the importance of the two periods of peak seasonal labor requirements, that of cotton chopping and hoeing, on the one hand, and that of cotton picking, on the other. More and more farmers are increasing the proportion of hand labor employed during the seasonal peaks and decreasing that of regular workers. The progress of mechanization appears to depend to some extent upon the presence of an available

supply of seasonal laborers; on the other hand, such a supply is created by mechanization. These conditions may promote migrancy in the Southeast and create a counterpart to the extensive cotton migration in Texas.

As regards other crops in the area, while there are extensive labor movements of limited range, as from southern Georgia to the truck, citrus, and cane districts of Florida, from surrounding counties into the Chadbourn, N. C., strawberry area, and from the West Virginia hills into the Winchester apple orchards, the chief long-range interstate migration is in connection with harvesting potatoes. From this movement, however, workers are drawn to harvest strawberries, tomatoes, and beans.

Potatoes

The potato migration starts in April in northeastern Florida. In May many of the Florida operators load their equipment and move up the coast to the next potato-producing area, Charleston and Beaufort Counties, S. C., where contracts for such work are likely to have been signed beforehand. These truckers bring with them a part of their experienced Florida labor force, which, to a large extent, originates in Georgia.

It is estimated that in 1940 from 2,000 to 2,500 of the workers in this area were of this type. Few of these workers use their own cars. From the Meggetts area (Charleston County), where work in tomatoes as well as in potatoes is frequently available, the migrants move in June to Beaufort County, N. C., and to the district around Elizabeth City (Pasquotank, Camden, and Currituck Counties, N. C.). In 1940 about

4,000 laborers, of whom at least 90 percent were interstate migrants, worked at potato harvesting in this district. From this point the next step is to the fertile regions around Norfolk and to the eastern shore of Virginia and Maryland.

On the Eastern Shore

It is estimated that between 4,000 and 7,000 laborers from outside the area are used annually on the Eastern Shore for harvesting strawberries, white potatoes, tomatoes, and other vegetables. In the past most of the labor has come from Norfolk and vicinity, but recently the number of workers drawn from the migration up the Atlantic seaboard has greatly increased.

By mid-July the migrant stream has reached New Jersey. From the surveys it appears that each year during the late summer between 3,000 and 5,000 nonlocal workers visit the central part of the State (Mercer, Middlesex, and Monmouth Counties) for the potato harvest. For the past 10 years most of this migratory potato labor has consisted of southern Negroes, a high percentage of whom have followed the maturing of this crop all the way from Florida. From New Jersey some of the migrants move on to Long Island. At this point, however, begins the return movement, although a few travel as far north as Aroostook County, Maine.

The preference of some potato growers for itinerant rather than local labor is based on the following considerations: The migrants are experienced, speedy workers, who appear at a specified time, perform the work, usually under the expert supervision

of a contractor, and pass on; under the contract system, the farmer deals with one man, the labor contractor, who makes all arrangements for one or more of the operations of digging, picking-up, grading, and loading the potatoes for shipment, all at a specified price; local labor may be inefficient, hard to manage and undependable, and inclined to haggle over wages and working conditions, and to leave without notice.

Nevertheless, in some areas like Beaufort County, there appears to be a preference for harvesting crews of local men, and for reasons similar to those usually advanced with reference to the migrants—dependability and efficiency. The workers who move from Georgia to Florida, or to the South Carolina peach area, although regarded as migrants, are, for the most part, laborers who retain a definite status in the home counties to which they usually return.

The Far Travelers

Work in the cotton crop in their home area alternates with work away from home in citrus, truck crops, or fruit. In the South Atlantic States, generally, far-ranging migration is an exceptional rather than a common occurrence. In South Carolina, for example, the migration of farm workers is confined almost exclusively to the potato and tomato areas of Charleston and Beaufort Counties. Elsewhere in the State, truck crops, and even the peaches of Spartanburg County, are handled almost entirely by resident labor. In any type-of-farming area in this region, probably nine-tenths of the total farm-labor needs are supplied from within the area. However, the remaining tenth

is not to be disregarded, since at times this represents from 25 to 90 percent of the total labor required for a given operation.

The apparently growing tendency of farm operators to rely increasingly upon seasonal laborers raises questions which farmers prefer to ignore. The use of seasonal labor involves less responsibility on the part of the farmer than in the case of sharecroppers or regular hired hands.

Often the farmer can avoid entirely the responsibility of hiring, firing, welfare, and management by dealing with a labor contractor, a padrone, or the agent of a cooperative association. And even when the farmer retains responsibility for the organization and supervision of the field work, his point of view is customarily of an extremely short-run character.

The Wants of Farmers

Farmers feel that they have a right to be able to hire such labor as they require, in such numbers as they think desirable, at a wage based upon what they feel they can pay, and without regard to the wage paid for similar work in industry or to the length of the period of employment which they offer. The statements of farmers—of large-scale operators who hire hundreds of men as well as of the smaller farmer—often assume a certain privilege in this matter, as though farm employers were in a class by themselves, entitled to special consideration in the hiring of labor.

To suggest any responsibility for managing in such a way as to

lengthen the period of employment, or for assisting in measures designed to increase and stabilize employment and improve the position of the seasonal farm laborer in the community is ordinarily regarded as fanciful.

"As much labor as I want when I want it—and a quick riddance afterward" sums up the views of many an otherwise highly responsible grower.

Community Burdens

Under present circumstances, with the increasing resort to seasonal labor, it is a question whether the community can afford to tolerate this attitude. For even with the best of labor management on the farm, and the utmost in the way of effort to stabilize employment, the difficulties inherent in a widespread resort to seasonal labor are considerable.

Unless other work is available to dovetail with the farm work, seasonality of employment means job-irregularity, loss of earnings, and social instability. Thus seasonal unemployment throws upon the community a burden, which, if borne, constitutes a subsidy to the industry involved. In the case of agriculture there may be no other way of arranging things. Seasons wait not upon the wishes of the farmer. In that case, however, it is all the more socially desirable that farmers should assume and exercise their responsibilities in such a way as to reduce the burden to the smallest proportions possible.

What the Census Shows

This article is based on reports and releases of the Bureau of the Census and gives sundry information about changes in American agriculture in the past decade.



AN AMERICAN farm today produces food for nearly twice as many people as a farm of 60 years ago, partly because of increased output per acre and partly because the farms themselves are larger.

Stated differently, it took one-fourth less acreage to produce food for one individual in 1940 than it did in 1880.

Those are among the many interesting trends in farming apparent in Census Bureau reports of the 1940 enumeration.

In 1940 each farm, averaging 174 acres, produced food for 21.6 persons, an average of 8.1 acres to feed one person. In 1880 the average farm contained 134 acres and produced food for 12.5 individuals—10.7 acres for each man, woman, and child in the Nation. In 1850 it required 12.7 acres of farm land to feed one person.

In 1930 each farm supplied 19.5 people. In 1920 the figure was 16.4; in 1910, 14.5; and in 1900, 13.2.

In 1850, when the first complete farm census was taken, each farm produced food for 16 persons, but farms then averaged 203 acres. The average size of farms had been reduced to 134 in 1880, had increased to 146 in 1900, and since that time has ranged between 138 in 1910 and 174 in 1940.

In Belgium farming is nearly 12 times as intensive. There it takes but two-thirds of an acre to feed one person, as compared to 8 acres here.

Among the major trends in American farming during the last 10 years were an increase in the total acreage in farms and increase in production of cattle, milk, hogs, and many vitamin-rich foods, and a decrease in production of sheep, lambs, horses, and mules.

Values

The number of farms on April 1, 1940, when the census was taken, was 6,096,789, compared to 6,288,648 as of April 1, 1930—a reduction of 3.1 percent in 10 years. Compared with 1935, the reduction in the number of farms was even more drastic. That census recorded 6,812,350.

Nevertheless, the land acreage in farms was 7.5 percent greater in 1940 than it was a decade earlier, the acreage figures being 1,060,507,355 in 1940 and 986,771,016 in 1930. In 1935 farm acreage was 1,054,515,111.

The 1940 farm census indicates an upward turn in the value of farms—land and buildings—as compared to 1935 figures, but it is still 29.7 percent under the valuations as shown by the 1930 census. The 1940 valuation of land and buildings was \$33,644,263,247, compared with \$32,858,

844,012 in 1935 and \$47,879,838,358 in 1930.

Of this 1940 valuation of \$33,644,263,247, the value of buildings alone on farms was nearly one-third, or \$10,405,085,980.

The value of farm implements and machinery in 1940 was shown to be \$3,059,266,327.

Number of Farms

In 1850, when the first complete census of American farm values was made, there were 1,449,073 farms with an acreage of 293,560,614 and a total value of \$3,271,575,426. The acre value was \$11.14, compared with \$69.38 per acre in 1920; \$31.16 per acre in 1935, and \$31.72 in 1940.

In 1939 crops were harvested from 321,757,900 acres, while crop failure was reported from 20,560,659 acres that had been planted. The report shows that although farm acreage increased in the last decade, the proportion of land used for crop production decreased.

The greatest percentage decrease in the number of farms occurred in Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, and Texas, the decline in that area being 12.6 percent. Percentage declines of 3.7 were shown in the South Atlantic area (Delaware, Maryland, the District of Columbia, Virginia, West Virginia, North Carolina and South Carolina, Georgia, and Florida) and in East South Central States (Kentucky, Tennessee, Alabama, and Mississippi). A 3.2-percent decline was shown in the Mountain area (Montana, Idaho, Wyoming, Colorado, New Mexico, Arizona, Utah, and Nevada); a 2.7-percent decline was indicated in the Middle Atlantic area (New York, New Jer-

sey, and Pennsylvania); and a 2-percent decline was shown in the West North Central area (Minnesota, Iowa, Missouri, North Dakota, South Dakota, Nebraska, and Kansas).

The three areas that showed increases in the number of farms were the New England States with an 8.2 percent increase; the Pacific States (Washington, Oregon, and California) 5.5 percent, and the East North Central States (Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, and Wisconsin) 4.1 percent.

Only two areas showed percentage decreases in the acreage of land in farms—New England, 6.4 percent, and the Middle Atlantic States, 4 percent.

Every area showed percentage decreases in the value of land and buildings as compared with 1930, the greatest shrinkage being 42 percent in the West North Central States. The percentage decline of values in the Pacific area was next greatest at 32.9 percent. The smallest decline in percentage value was 13.4 in the East Central section and the next smallest percentage decline was 18 in the South Atlantic area.

Iowa led all the States in the value of farm lands and buildings, its total being \$2,690,744,215. Texas was second with \$2,590,337,654; Illinois was third with \$2,537,117,306, and California was fourth with \$2,167,262,648. All other States were under \$2,000,000,000.

Cattle

Beef and dairy cattle numbers increased by 6,424,434 in the decade, bringing the total to 60,674,734. Cattle were reported by 4,843,917 farms.

Leading States, in order of cattle population, were Texas, 6,281,537; Iowa, 4,213,010; Wisconsin, 3,236,686; Minnesota, 3,090,394; Nebraska, 2,559,136; Kansas, 2,507,571; Missouri, 2,471,024; Illinois, 2,455,381; Oklahoma, 2,194,647; and California, 2,056,239.

Milk production increased during the decade, but not so fast as the total population—probably reflecting the sharply reduced ratio of children. Total milk production from 21,936,556 cows for 1939 was 11,508,243,769 gallons. It represented an increase of 812,335 milk cows compared with 1929 and an increase of nearly 500 million gallons of milk. But it was a decrease of more than 2½ gallons for each person, because population increased at a higher ratio than milk production. Milk production was equivalent to 87.4 gallons per person this time, compared to 90 gallons 10 years earlier. Milk production was reported on 4,663,701 out of a total of 6,096,799 farms.

The census showed 10,086,971 horses and 3,844,560 mules on farms, a total of 13,931,531. Ten years earlier there were 13,383,574 horses and 5,353,950 mules, a total of 18,737,524.

The decline in the number of horses was almost 25 percent, and in the number of mules more than 28 percent, in the decade. The horse population on farms reached its peak in 1910 with 19,833,113. Mule population reached its peak in 1925 with 5,680,897.

Iowa was first in 1940 in the number of horses with 728,213, and Texas was second with 638,406. Texas

was first in mules—537,801—and Mississippi was second with 337,620.

Tractors and automobiles are chiefly responsible for the decline in number of work animals. Nearly \$260,000,000 worth of tractors are being made annually.

The close link between corn and hog production is illustrated by census returns. Nearly two-thirds of the 34,037,253 hogs on farms on April 1, 1940, were in 11 States where corn is a major item of farm production. Approximately half of all of the hogs were in six Corn Belt States—Iowa, Illinois, Indiana, Missouri, Ohio, and Minnesota.

On 6,096,799 Farms

Of the Nation's 6,096,799 farms, the Bureau of the Census reported:

4,456,259 had acreage in corn.
3,436,325 reported hay crops.
2,631,344 harvested Irish potatoes.

1,777,518 produced oats.

1,589,723 raised cotton.

1,385,279 threshed spring and winter wheats.

1,163,719 raised sweetpotatoes and yams.

Only 10 States reported no production of tobacco in the 1940 census—Arizona, Colorado, Delaware, Idaho, Maine, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming. The 5 leading tobacco-producing States and their harvest in pounds in 1939 were: North Carolina, 715,616,397; Kentucky, 324,518,411; Virginia, 136,753,568; South Carolina, 118,962,944; and Tennessee, 109,422,777. Total tobacco production of 38 States was 1,699,727,914 pounds, the biggest crop reported at any census in the Nation's history.

Declining Enrollment

IN COUNTRY SCHOOLS

By O. CUDLEY SCANDRETTE. *In the August LAND POLICY REVIEW, W. F. Kumlien discussed structural changes in Kingsbury County. Here, another aspect of the changing picture of farm life is treated: The declining enrollment in elementary schools. The data concern one county, but similar studies have been made in 23 counties of South Dakota, and the same trend is found to exist in all of them—even those whose total population has not declined.*



FOR SEVERAL years population experts have predicted that the falling birth rate would eventually result in rapidly declining elementary enrollments. In Kingsbury County, South Dakota, this prophecy has been in the process of fulfillment since 1931.

Between 1930 and 1940, the number of elementary pupils in the county dropped from 2,886 to 1,868; the average enrollment in rural schools dropped from 15 to 9 pupils; and 24 rural schools were closed for lack of sufficient pupils. Because the number of births per thousand of the population fell from 26.8 to 17 in the past 20 years, the decline in the birth rate probably has been chiefly responsible for the reduction in the number of elementary school pupils. Migration was an important factor, too; the elementary schools with the greatest drop in enrollments were the ones in townships where outward migration was heavy between 1930 and 1940.

An accompanying table indicates that since 1930 elementary enrollment has declined in the common, independent, and consolidated schools, with the total elementary enrollment shrinking from 2,886 to 1,808 during the 10-year period—a 35 percent loss. During the same period the total population shrank from 12,805 to 10,809—a loss of 15.6 percent. It will be noted that by 1940 elementary enrollment in Kingsbury county was only a trifle larger than in 1890.

There are 103 one-room rural schools in Kingsbury County. More than one-half of these schools (52) are in the township districts of Bancroft (LeSueur), Manchester, Iroquois, De Smet, Baker, Whitewood, and Spring Lake. The other rural schools are in small one-school districts. Kingsbury is one of a group of counties in the eastern part of the State in which this type of school organization is found.

Because the early settlers of these counties had come from States where

Elementary Enrollment in the Common, Independent and Consolidated Schools of Kingsbury County by Five-Year Periods, 1890-1940.¹

Year	Total	Common	Independent	Consolidated
1940.....	1,868	888	871	109
1935.....	2,235	1,131	1,968	136
1930.....	2,886	1,495	1,225	166
1925.....	2,813	1,501	1,163	149
1920.....	2,657	1,431	1,226	.....
1915.....	2,592	1,597	995	.....
1910.....	3,075	1,958	1,117	.....
1905.....	3,031	1,999	1,032	.....
1900.....	1,981	1,981	.....	.....
1895.....	2,148	2,148	.....	.....
1890.....	1,553	1,553	.....	.....

¹ Prior to 1905 there were no independent and consolidated districts. Prior to 1923 there were no consolidated districts.

the small district system prevailed, it was only natural that they should establish a similar pattern here. In 1883, the territorial legislature provided for township district organization but did not force small districts already in existence to disband. Consequently, both the township district and the smaller one-school district are found in Kingsbury County.

As previously noted, the shrinkage in elementary enrollments had caused 24 schools to close by 1940. Seven other schools had 5 or fewer pupils during the 1939-40 term, and may be closed within the next year or two. Twenty-four had 6 to 10 pupils, 32 had 11 to 15 pupils, and only 16 had more than 15 pupils. In other words, more than half of the rural schools in Kingsbury County were either closed or operating with 10 or fewer pupils in 1939-40.

The operation of schools for fewer than 10 pupils is excessively expensive on a cost-per-pupil basis. Because it was difficult to determine the maintenance cost for individual schools in township districts, instructional cost has been used as a basis of comparison; during the 1939-40 term, this cost varied from \$31 in district 64, where 17 pupils were enrolled, to \$135 in district 5, where only 4 pupils were enrolled. The average per pupil instructional costs for all schools was \$46.48.

A table is given on the next page to show the average per pupil instructional costs for various sizes of rural schools in Kingsbury County. The costs are based on the teachers' salaries only; textbooks and supplies are not included.

It can be readily seen from the table that elementary enrollment in many of the rural schools has declined to the point where the per-

Size of school	Number of schools	Number of pupils	Total cost	Average cost per pupil
Pupils.....	103			
Total.....	24	963	\$44,760	\$46.48
Closed.....	7			
5 and under.....	24	30	3,500	116.67
6 to 10.....	32	196	13,117	66.92
11 to 15.....	16	427	17,758	41.59
16 and over.....		310	9,385	30.27

pupil cost of operating the school is becoming prohibitive.

An examination of the chart that shows where farm children in Kingsbury County attend high school suggests a possible ultimate solution to the problem caused by declining elementary enrollments.

Since 1921 it has been compulsory for school districts that do not have high schools of their own to pay tuition costs for pupils residing within their boundaries who attend high school in nearby independent districts. Because the expense of operating their own high schools is usually prohibitive, all of the common school districts in the county, except Manchester and Bancroft, have sent their high school pupils to nearby independent districts, paying tuition costs. Eventually the common school districts may solve the problem of excessive per pupil costs for educating elementary pupils in the same way in which they have already solved the high school problem. Instead of maintaining their own schools at a heavy per-pupil cost, districts may close their schools, send the few remaining pupils to the town school, and pay tuition and transportation charges. This procedure would save the district money and would also offer greater educa-

tional advantages to the pupils. Since elementary enrollment is declining in the towns as well as in the rural schools, it is probable that within the next 5 years the present independent district facilities will be large enough to accommodate both the town and country pupils.

Shift to the Towns

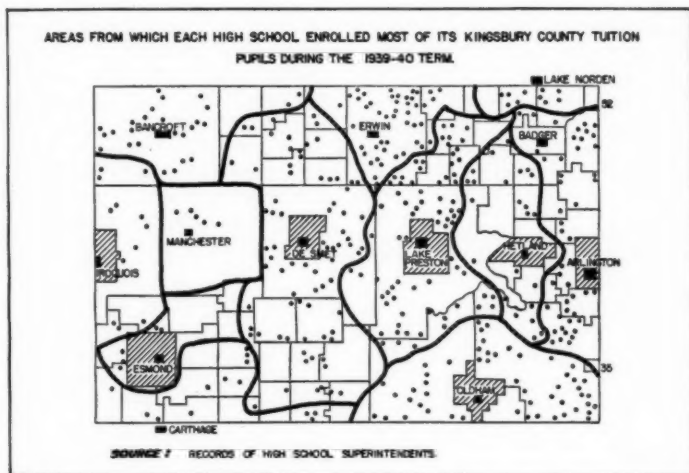
Because practically every farmer in the county has good roads to his nearest trade center, the idea of sending elementary pupils to the independent school districts as paying guests is not inconceivable. Good roads and automobiles gradually have caused many former country institutions to be shifted to the towns. Cases in point are the cross-roads general store and the open-country church. The farmer now goes to the village center to buy groceries, clothing, and other necessities, to sell his produce, to attend church, and to visit and engage in other forms of recreation. The farmer also sends his sons and daughters to the village high school. If the elementary enrollments continue to drop and the per-pupil costs of educating pupils in the rural districts continue to rise, it is likely that before long rural districts may

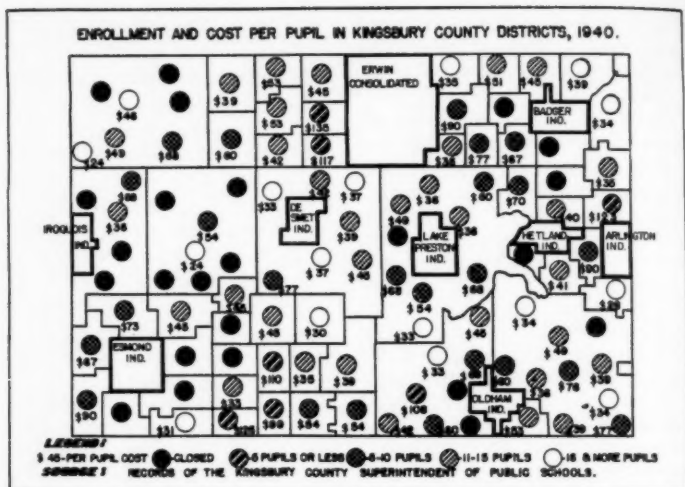
find it to their advantage to send their few remaining elementary pupils to the town schools as tuition students.

In adjusting to the declining elementary enrollment, the first step will probably be for township district school boards to keep one school open in the center of the township and to close all other schools when the enrollment drops below a predetermined figure. Pupils remaining in the area formerly served by a closed school will then be sent to the centralized school, the board paying transportation costs as provided by law. In the case of small school districts, the first step will be to close the school when the enrollment drops below a specified minimum, sending their remaining pupils as tuition students to the nearest school which is still in operation. This type of adjustment is now operating in Kingsbury County.

Manchester Township

Manchester township is a case in point. During the 1938-39 term, 6 schools were operating in the township with a combined enrollment of 48 pupils. One other school had operated in the township previously, but was discontinued at that time. In the face of declining enrollments and rapidly rising per pupil costs, the following year the school board decided to close four of the schools and send the remaining 34 pupils to the 2 schools which were left open. On the basis of instructional and transportation costs, Manchester township saved \$1,600 by closing the 4 schools. During the 1938-39 term, elementary instructional and transportation cost in the township amounted to \$3,220, compared to \$1,620 during the 1939-40 term. Of this amount, \$495 was spent for





transportation. No money was spent for tuition, because all elementary pupils attended Manchester township school. In other words, instructional and transportation costs during the 1939-40 term amounted to approximately one-third of the 1938-39 figure. On a cost per pupil basis, the instructional and transportation expense of operating the Manchester township elementary school system during the 1939-40 term amounted to only \$47.66, compared to \$67.08 during the 1938-39 term.

Two other possibilities for reorganizing the county school system exist. One would be to reorganize the rural school systems on a county-wide district basis. Under this plan the county school board would have authority to discontinue small schools and establish large schools at strategic points. Another would be for several school districts to consolidate. If this is done, however, great care should be taken to include a large enough area to insure a sufficient number of students and provide a large enough unit of support.



Books

AN EMPIRE OF DUST. *Lawrence Svobida*. The Caxton Printers, Ltd. Caldwell, Idaho. 203 pages.

by O. J. SCOVILLE

MR. SVOBIDA wrote his book as a personal narrative of 9 years of farming experience in Meade County, Kans. It is, he says, "a true, inside story of the plight of the average farmer in the Dust Bowl, relating facts without malice or prejudice against this great region."

By the author's own admission, it is not an objective, detached record, and it should not be expected that a personal account of failure, disappointment, and the loss of health and money would be made with scholarly precision.

The period covered is 1929 to 1938. It begins with Svobida's arrival in Meade County as a young man and ends with his admission of defeat. Much of the book is taken up with the details of farming experience year by year. Each year is discussed in its turn, but the book is not organized in a manner to make it easy to follow the thread of continuity.

Nine crop years are recorded, one of which gave Mr. Svobida a good wheat crop but a low price, one year brought a fair crop, one a poor crop, and six were years of failure. When his wheat failed, his other crops generally failed, too.

Besides this record of crop production, the book contains chapters

about the early years of the AAA program, the effects of dust on health and morale, methods of controlling soil blowing, the processes that led to the creation of the Dust Bowl, and realistic descriptions of duststorms.

THE DISCUSSION of the early years of the AAA is largely taken up with anecdotes about the reception which farmers gave the new program and about problems of local administration. As an account of the effects that the AAA had upon farming and farmers in this area, it is inadequate. The descriptions of duststorms are authentic and, although one who has been in a "duster" will feel that they should be more powerfully written, they are far better reading than the descriptions found in technical reports.

Svobida feels that measures to control erosion and conserve moisture that have been developed in recent years will be of limited usefulness. "In favored localities some of the work that is being done is going to be successful in making it possible for a few to prosper on land which the many have had to abandon in despair."

And he concludes his book with this pessimistic observation: "My

own humble opinion is that, with the exception of a few favored localities, the whole Great Plains region is already a desert that cannot be reclaimed through the plans and labors of men."

There are a few errors of fact—like the statement that 200,000,000 acres were planted to wheat in the Great Plains in the post-World War period. This is an acreage larger than is planted in the whole United States.

Some will question many of the phenomena that accompany dust storms, as described in the book. For example, it is said that wheat is frequently electrocuted by static electricity generated during the storms. Waiving the question of exact scientific validity of these observations, it is safe to say that there is some basis in fact for most if not all of them, and that they are commonly accepted among farmers in the area.

Those who feel that farmers in the Dust Bowl will voluntarily adopt and maintain a grassland economy based primarily upon the raising of livestock, should ponder Svobida's account of an earlier period.

"Land appraised at about \$10 an acre for grazing commanded a hundred dollars when planted in wheat, so there were mortgage interest and

rising taxes to meet, but one good wheat crop sold at a good price might well yield returns equal to the profits to be earned in 10 years of stock raising, and who was wise enough to be able to see into the future?"

One may wonder how influential our agricultural programs will be if this alternative presents itself again.

The book is written in a homely style, which is refreshing in its directness. It has the merit that it reads like a book that had been written by a farmer.

The literature of the Dust Bowl is as meager as its vegetation. One would think that this bitter chapter in American social history, affecting thousands of people and lasting many years would have given us a written record to do it justice. The President's Great Plains Committee produced a technically adequate report but not one to stir the imagination; magazine writers have too often dealt with the duststorms with hysteria and distortion; in both cases men came into the area, looked upon it, and wrote. An Empire of Dust has many literary shortcomings and technical inadequacies, but it came out of the Dust Bowl, and as a human record of the duststorm it is the best that we have.

ROSANNA OF THE AMISH. *Joseph W. Yoder.* The Yoder Publishing Co. Huntingdon, Pa. 319 pages.

by DEWITT C. WING

PREFACING this quaint book of history, which concerns an agricultural people dedicated to a religious-economic way of life in

Pennsylvania and some other States, the author says that he was born of Amish parents, grew as an Amish boy to manhood, knows the Amish

as one of them, and knows in detail their social, religious, and secular customs and practices.

All episodes in the book, he states, are based on fact; every name is that of a real person. Here is the actual life story of an Amish girl. It pictures with idiomatic fidelity the life and art of farming in a Pennsylvania region before the coming of automobiles, tractors, trucks, and hard roads.

"I knew personally every principal character in the book except one, to whom a fictitious name is given," the author states. "Every ceremony and service is described exactly as it takes place, and as it is carried out and has been carried out practically unchanged for well on to 250 years."

AT THE END of the story the author says in a supplement that "the Amish described still hold to the belief that new things and innovations are of the world and worldly, hence wrong. That is why they have kept their manner of dress and mode of worship almost without change for over two centuries. Accordingly, they do not use automobiles, telephones, electric lights, centralized heating plants for the house (hot water or steam heat), bathrooms, or any of the modern conveniences."

In the Kishacoquillas Valley, however, there are six distinct denominations of Amish. They have the same Articles of Faith, but have no church fellowship with one another. They mingle rather freely at weddings and funerals and in business affairs, but in church affairs they have no common dealings at all.

"No member of one denomination would think of trying to commune with any other denomination; he could not if he would. The two more progressive denominations hold

their church services in church buildings, but the four conservative denominations still hold their services in their dwelling houses or in their barns, if the house is not large enough. They never hold evening services. The progressive elements permit the use of all modern conveniences, and are becoming rather liberal in the matter of dress."

AMISH PEOPLE, according to the author, "are absolutely independent of the Government. They pay their taxes and obey the law." They see to it that no Amish are on relief or in almshouses.

"A few years ago when officials from Washington came to Lancaster County where many conservative Amish live, Amish farmers were asked to sign Government contracts promising to curtail their crop acreage. The Amish farmers said: 'No; we don't sign Government contracts; we obey the law. Tell us what you want us to do and we'll do it.' When they agreed to obey the law but refused to sign contracts, the officials were nonplussed. They returned to Washington. Returning to Lancaster County in the autumn, they found the crops curtailed according to the requirements. But the Amish farmers were immovable in refusing to accept money from the Government."

Many young men and a few young women among the liberal Amish go to college, and subsequently teach or go into business; but there are no college people among the conservative denominations.

"The Amish live in colonies or settlements, and do not associate freely with other people. Probably 25,000 to 40,000 Amish live in the United States and Canada. The largest

groups live in Pennsylvania, Ohio, Indiana, Illinois, Michigan, Iowa, Kansas, the Dakotas, Missouri, Nebraska, Oklahoma, and a few colonies in Oregon. They believe in nonconformity, nonresistance, non-

swearing, and unworldliness in general. They are mostly farmers. They do not usually make much money. Their wants are few. They are seldom poor. They are law-abiding, quiet, and sober."

HANDBOOK FOR PENNSYLVANIA ASSESSORS. Published by the Pennsylvania Government Administration Service. Philadelphia.

by RICHARD L. BIGELOW, JR.

Research reports have indicated that abuses in the administration of the property tax underly many of the problems of local government. Tax delinquency has been caused by poor assessment practices, as well as by maladjustments in land utilization and other factors. Many instances of omission of taxable properties from tax rolls and consequent loss of revenue have been found. The existence of inequality in tax burdens frequently is a result of an inefficient assessment process.

Assessing property is a technical task, requiring specialized knowledge of the factors that establish value and of the evidences that may be used to measure value. Most assessors in Pennsylvania, as elsewhere, are laymen in the business of valuation. The assessor's job often is regarded as a political stepping-stone to a higher public office, and only in the larger cities does the position require full-time employment and offer compensation commensurate with year-round service. The fact that trained men are not attracted by the position of local assessor does not, however, detract from the major importance of the assessment process as the primary action in property tax administration.

This handbook gives Pennsylvania assessors usable information on methods of arriving at valuation. It is a guide that the assessor may use to improve the effectiveness of assessment. It recommends more active participation of the boards of county commissioners, the county governing body, in the assessment process and emphasizes the functions of these boards in establishing "unit values," conducting preliminary meetings, and carrying out the assessment revision process.

Upon the request of the commissioners of Bradford County for assistance in solving assessment and tax delinquency problems, a committee of 21 members—local assessors, county commissioners, private and Government research workers, and college professors—was formed. Experienced persons, all of them committee members, were assigned the tasks of writing the various sections of the manual, and the products were submitted to the committee for revision and approval.

Rural Real Property

The resulting cooperatively written handbook is divided into six parts: Assessment in Pennsylvania;

assessing urban real property; procedure in assessing urban real property; assessment of personal property and occupations; revision, equalization, and appeals; and the county commissioners' part in assessments.

Of particular interest to agricultural economists is the part on procedure in assessing rural real property. A statement of the legal provisions regarding assessment of rural property precedes a summary of the valuation process.

"Systematic assessing of rural property consists of two major parts. The first is concerned with the preparation and adoption of simple classification and basic unit values or 'standards' for land and buildings. The second deals with the assessor's use of these basic classifications and values in assessing the individual properties. Once the basic unit values have been set up, the assessor begins the actual assessing."

Local, County Officials

It is recommended that local and county officials obtain and use information on sale prices, soils, crop yields, topography and elevation, timber, available markets, locations with regard to roads and electric lines, buildings, and other influencing factors. The unit values derived from these data should be determined by the county commissioners in meeting with the assessors.

After these values have been determined, the commissioners should draw up a simple land classification map, indicating all the pertinent factors mentioned. The assessor should then apply the unit values, stated in

designated ranges to allow for variations within classes, to the lands and buildings, and make the necessary permanent records of his work and the final valuation. When he deviates from the stated unit values he should note his reasons for doing so and be prepared to support his valuation if it is contested. This section concludes with a description of the various types of maps and surveys that are available and useful to the assessor and to the county commissioners.

The procedure suggested for assessing rural real property varies from present practice in Pennsylvania in several important ways. The use of detailed data in establishing unit values, the use of permanent complete records, and the emphasis on the role of the county commissioners in aiding the local assessors by holding preliminary citizen meetings and by establishing unit values are examples of additional procedures within the law which are recommended.

A Guide to Assessors

This book is significant as a guide to locally elected assessors, and as a product of intergroup research and planning efforts. Its benefits will not be limited to the improvement of assessment processes in Pennsylvania. It stands as an excellent example to other public officials—tax collectors, clerks, recorders, among others—of a worth-while cooperative approach to the problem of inefficient and outmoded local government administration.

We no longer have the frontiers of a continent to conquer; that much has been done by the men and women of courage who were our forebears. But who will say there is not work for every man and woman on the frontiers of a better civilization?

—GOVE HAMBIDGE

